

## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT NO.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 1.2em; display: inline-block;"></div> 25X1
SUBJECT	Political Strength of the Military in the USSR	DATE DISTR.	18 March 1954
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1. The fact that high-ranking Soviet military men are being given increasing prominence within the Communist Party and Government of the USSR since the inception of the Malenkov regime is a reflection of a political maneuver by Malenkov rather than an indication of increased power of the military. It would be a mistake and highly dangerous to overestimate the political strength and influence of the military because of this trend.
2. The military men who have been given high posts in the Government or Party within the past year are first of all Party members. The Central Committee of the Communist Party watches with particular care all activities of the military. Military men are not able to act independently, and all are constantly apprehensive about making a mistake which will cost them their jobs. Party representatives in the political divisions of the military forces keep close watch at all times and are aware of planning and other activities at all levels, including the joint staff of the Ministry of Defense. All actions and plans are examined and known, and this fact prevents very effectively any independent action.
3. Malenkov used the support of the military as an emergency measure against the Beriya group, but this unusual occurrence does not indicate that the influence of the military on the political life of the country, and specifically on Malenkov, has increased to any great extent. It would be a mistake to conclude that the military will ever, under present or similar circumstances, be able to act without the full knowledge and approval of the Party.
4. Stalin always kept military men around him who were willing and able to comply with the orders from him and from the Party. Prominent men such as Timoshenko, Vasilevskiy, and Konev were far from brilliant, but knew how to follow orders. They can be contrasted to especially capable military men such as Marshal Meritskov, Sokolovskiy, and Zhukov. Marshal Zhukov is now in the process of recovering his former high status. He is very capable and inclined to be independent, but he cannot do anything alone, and Malenkov can be expected to keep him as well under control as did Stalin.

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5. The increasing number of important Party and Government jobs being given to the military is an original maneuver of Malenkov to subject in a more fundamental sense the military leaders to Party control. That is to say, the intention is to increase the responsibility of military leaders to the Party.

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